

CHRISTIAN RELIGION

AGAIN DISCOVERED

After the long and dark Night of Apostacy, which
hath overshadowed the whole World for many
ages; and the profession and practice thereof
of witnessed unto by the
Scriptures.



And here all may see who it is of all these Sects and divers forms
of Religion in these Nations, that are agreeable to the Scrip-
tures in what they profess and practise; and who it is that are
not according thereto, for the line of true judgement is
stretched upon all profession, and a true search into, and
tryal thereof is made, and hereby it is manifest who it
is, and what sort of people, that may justly claim
the benefit of the Protectors Oath, to be pro-
tected thereby in their practises of Religi-
on, who hath bound himself to main-
tain and uphold that Christian Re-
ligion which is according to the
Scriptures, &c.

*This is written for the good of this Commonwealth, and the informa-
tion of all people in it.
By a friend to all people, especially them that fear God, and love
righteousness.*

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Mouth near Aldersgate, 1658.

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Again discovered, &c.

FOrasmuch as Oliver Cromwell, called Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland, (chief Ruler according to man) hath bound himself by an oath, and sworn that he will uphold and maintaine in the true reformed Protestant Christian Religion in the purity thereof, as it is contained in the Old and new Testament of the Scriptures; which oath he is bound to perform before the Lord and unto all men.

Now it remains to be tried and proved what the Christian Religion is, and who it is in these Nations that are of the true reformed Protestant Christian Religion, in the purity thereof, as it is contained in the Scriptures, seeing there are abundance of Sects and diversities of judgements, and many Assemblies and gatherings of people who are divers in their wayes, in their practices, and in their form of Religion in these Nations, which doth all profess the Scriptures, and that their form of Religion is according to the Scriptures; but this cannot be; but it will be manifest otherwise; for the Scriptures which were given forth by the one spirit of God, bears not witness of many true Ways, or unto many true Religions, but unto one truth, and unto one true Religion, and is the Declaration of one way of life, and salvation by one Jesus Christ, and there is no other Name under heaven given for salvation; and they that believe in him, and receive him, they it is only that are of the true Religion, who are guided by his spirit, and changed thereby from death to life, and such hath unity with the Father, and with the Son, and one with another, and are not of this world, but heirs of the Kingdom of God, and these may own and claim a title to be defended and preserved in their exercise and practice of Religion.

There-

Therefore come all sorts of people, and let us try and prove who it is that is of the true Religion, and who it is that he is bound to maintain and uphold by his oath: Come I say, all Sects and sorts of people, and appear to trial; Dare you join issue with me in this matter, to try your profession and practice of Religion, whether it be according to the Scriptures in the purity thereof yea or nay; for the Lord hath put it into my heart to lay you all to the line of true judgement, and to prove you whether you must be upholden and maintained in your Religion, yea or nay: Come claim your priviledge, if your profession and practice in Religion be according to the Scriptures, then you may own your right, and the benefit of the Protectors oath; but if your profession and practice in Religion be otherwise, and not according to the Scriptures, then you must stand back, and defend yourselves if you can, for the Protector is not bound to maintain and uphold you in your practice of Religion: And with this argument I shall try you all, *whatsoever is professed and practised for Religion, for which there is neither command nor pre-
sident in Scripture, is not according to the Scripture*; let this fall where it may, this is truth; and therefore all people come to trial, and receive your judgement by this rule.

And first, the true Religion is a walking with God in purity and holiness, a performing of good to him, and not doing any evil, a belief in Christ, and receiving of him, and a living in him, and through the operation of his spirit, to be changed into his image, and the body of sin and death put off, and a living to God in all things, and not a living to this vain World in any thing, but in all things to be guided by the spirit of Christ: This in short is a description of the true Religion, and they that are of this Religion shall be saved in the day of the Lord, and in equity and righteousness should be protected according to the Oath before-mentioned; or else the oath is not performed in justice, but rather broken through transgression; And first of all, as concerning that profession & practice in Religion, which is most general in these Nations, I mean such as *sprinkle Infants, and are sprinkled being Infants, professing it to be the Baptism into the faith of Christ, and that it is a seal of the new Covenant, and of remission of sins, and that thereby people are made capable of union*

with Christ, and that *is* the sign of regeneration, &c. This is practised and professed by many for Religion, but this practice and doctrine is not according to the Scripture, being it was never commanded, nor any example for it in Scripture; therefore all ye through all these Nations that are made Christians, and ownes your title in Christianity, and a right to fellowship with Christ, and that ye are joynd to the Church, and become members of Christ, because you were sprinkled when you were Infants, (and all ye that teach this for doctrine, and practice it for Religion) you are not of the true Christian Religion in the purity thereof, as it is contained in the Scriptures. This I do affirm; therefore stand you by, for what you practise and professe, there is neither command nor president in Scripture; if you could shew any, you are now called, and a necessity is put upon you to make use of your knowledge, if you would be protected in this Commonwealth in your practise of RELIGION; likewise you sing, and give to sing *Dauids* Plumes in rime and meeter, professing it is to the glory and honor of God; ye practice this as an Ordinance of God, as a part of his Worship, and as a part of your Religion; but this practice and profession also is manifest not to be according to Scriptures, because it was never commanded, neither is there any president for this practice in the Scriptures, in Gospel-times: Therefore in this part of your Religion you cannot justly own to be protected and maintained; because the Protectors oath reaches not to uphold & maintain any such practices in Religion, which is not according to the Scriptures; likewise all ye that meets together to exercise your Religion, and to worship God in *Temples made with hands*, set apart by you for that practice, professing them to be Churches of Christ, this is not according, but contrary to the Scriptures, which saith, *God dwells not in Temples made with hands*; neither did the Saints of old constantly practice any such thing, but it was the persecutors that met in *Temples made with hands*, who cast out, and hailed the *Apostles* out of such *Temples*, so that in this practice you cannot justly own to be protected, as not being a practice in Religion according to Scriptures. Likewise all ye whose Ministers preacheth for hire, and have hire for preaching, so much a year, and so much a Sermon at a Town, or a Parish in a settled place, and who takes Tythes,

and compells people to pay tythes by a Law; such are not the Ministers of Christ; and ye that uphold such for Ministers of Christ, are false in judgement, and blind in understanding, and are not of that Christian Religion which is according to Scriptures in the purity thereof, neither Ministers nor people, for the Ministers of Christ never acted any such thing; it was the false Prophets, and false Apostles that preached for hire, and for gifts and rewards; neither did the Saints and Churches of Christ look upon them that acted those things, to be Ministers of Christ, but on the contrary, declared against them to be deceivers; so that all you people, and you professed Ministers that acts those things that the false Prophets acted, and all you people that loves to have it so, and gives hire to your Ministers for preaching, and consenteth unto it, none of you are of the christian Religion, as it is *held forth in the Scriptures*; because this part of your practice in Religion is not according, but contrary to Scriptures: Now subtracting all these in these Nations from the whole which practiseth and professeth these things mentioned for Ordinances of God, and for his Worship, none of you are of the true christian religion as it is held forth in the Scriptures, because these things which you practise for Religion, is not held forth in all the Scriptures by any example or command; likewise you are of the greatest number of people in all these Nations; and that practice and profession in Religion which the greatest number follow and exercise themselves in, cannot be the true christian Religion, because the Scripture saith, *Few are in the straight way that leads to life*, to wit, in the pure and true Religion; but many are in the broad way that leads to destruction; and such that are the greatest number: who are in the broad way, are not in the Religion in the purity thereof, as it is held forth in the Scriptures; likewise many of ye who practise those things mentioned for Religion, are ye: *unconverted to God*; but lives in wickedness, in the pride and vanities, and in all the evil of this World, in double-dealing, in drunkenness, in Whoredom, & in the Works of darkness, therefore you are not of the true christian Religion, neither do you walk with God in purity and holiness, neither are you changed by Christ into his Image, nor are guided by his spirit, neither do you live to God in any thing, but to this world in.

in all things; and your Religion is manifest not to be according to the Scriptures, but contrary; and so let all people consider whether or no you must be maintained in your Religion. Come forth and plead your cause all ye that are called *Presbyterians*; and *Independents*; and all others, stand up, and prove if you can, your practice in religion to be according to Scriptures; but seeing no man is able to prove these things mentioned, which is practised by you for Religion, to wit, *Sprinkling of Infants*, and *singing Davids experiences in rime and meter*, and *worshipping God in set-places*, as *Idol-Temples*; and *preaching for*, and *giving great sums of money for preaching*, with other things practised by you for Religion; neither were these things ever commanded in Scriptures; neither is there any example for the practise of these things in Scripture by any of the Lords people, & therefore you cannot justly own a title in the Protectors oath, to be maintained and upheld by vertue thereof in these your practises of Religion; for it appears he is but bound onely to uphold and maintain that Religion which is according to Scriptures, and not them who practise those things for Religion which are not according, but contrary to the Scriptures; Likewise all ye that are called gathered churches, who holds forth for Doctrine that *the Scriptures are the word*, (by which the world was made) and that *the Scriptures are the foundation*; and that *the Scriptures are the way to salvation*; & that *the Letter and the Spirit are inseparable*; and that *the Scriptures are both the writings and the thing signified*; and that *except a man be baptized with water, he cannot be saved*; with such like Doctrines which have been held forth by some professing themselves to be of the church of Christ; all you are manifest not to be of the christian religion, because those doctrines are not according, but rather contrary to the Scriptures: Likewise all ye whose practise in the exercise of Religion is but by imitation from the Scriptures, and you are not led by the spirit of the Father in what you speak, & practise, you are not of the true christian religion which the Scripture speaks of; for the sons of God, & who are of the true Religion, are led by the spirit of God, & not by their own thoughts & imaginations, & the traditions of men; and all that are not led by the spirit of the Father, are not of the true christian Religion as it is held forth in the

the Scriptures, and not any that are such can justly own to be protected in their Religion, because it is not according to the Scriptures; likewise all ye that doth profess the things of God and Christ, and that you are members of the church of Christ, and professes righteousness and truth in words, and yet lives in pride and the vanities of this world, and in unrighteousness, and the customs of the heathen, which are vain; & are not cleansed from unrighteousness, nor freed from the body of sin & death; neither doth answer your profession with a conversation, shewing that you are not guided with that spirit whose words you do profess, all you are hypocrites, & lives in hypocrisy, none of you are of the true Christian Religion as it is held forth in the Scripture: for the exercise in true Religion sheweth forth in life what is professed in words; come try your selves, and prove your selves all sorts of people, for now your Religion is to be tried, what Name soever you go under, and all you that practise and profess those things for Religion for which there is neither command nor president in Scripture, your Religion is concluded not to be according to Scriptures, and so no title or priviledge can any of you justly own of being upheld or maintained by the *Protectors* oath; but as I have said, for sprinkling of Infants, and singing *David's* experiences in rime and meeter, &c there is neither command nor president in Scriptures, and therefore you that practise those things which I have mentioned for Religion, are not of the true christian Religion which is according to the Scriptures, which is to be protected. Likewise all ye that persecutes by reproaches or revilings, and cruelty, or that causeth the people of God to be persecuted, many of you there are in these Nations which professeth Religion, yet are envious persons, and persecutors of the innocent, hereby it is manifest that you are not of that Religion which is according to Scriptures, for the Saints never persecuted any, but were themselves persecuted for righteousness sake, so you are not to be protected in such exercise, because it is not according, but contrary to the Scriptures, for you have no example from the Saints for professing and practising Religion, and yet persecuting such as are of the true Religion, whose consciences are truly exercised towards God, and towards all men.

Now

Now seeing that it is discovered in part, who it is that are not of the true christian Religion according to the Scriptures; it remains to be proved (if there be any) who it is that is of the true christian Religion as it is held forth in the Scriptures, and who it is that is to be protected in their practise and exercise of Religion: And as concerning the despised and rejected people called *Quakers*, herein I shal speak for them as a Friend to them, and a lover of their ways, who is not ashamed of their practises in Religion, and shall measure and try their practises in Religion whether it be according to Scripture, and if it prove so to be, that what they practise for Religion, and holds forth for Doctrine, is according to the Scriptures, then why should not they own their right and priviledge to be upholden and maintained by the Protectors oath, who hath sworn to uphold and maintain them and their Religion, whose exercise in Religion is according to Scriptures, being that same people is, and hath been a faithful subjects of this Commonwealth.

And first of all, they dare not own themselves to be *Christians*, nor to be members of *Christ*, nor to have any right or title to the Kingdom of God, but as they witnesse converting by the Spirit of the Lord, and are changed from death to life, and from darknesse to light, and from Satans power to the power of God, through the operation of the same Spirit, and as in all their works and ways, and exercises in Religion, they are guided by the same Spirit who leadeth them out of the World, and out of all the vanities and evil works thereof; and this is according to the Scriptures, and their Religion herein is justified by the Scriptures, who witnesseeth *That Christ is in them*, and that they have received him through faith, and thereby are cleansed from all unrighteousnesse, and have put off, and are putting off the body of sin and death, and walks with God in purity and holinesse, being led by the Spirit of God therein, and with God they have peace, being reconciled by Jesus Christ, who is their salvation, and they have no other; and this is according to the Scriptures.

And againe as concerning their meetings, and the manner thereof, it is not contrary, but according to the Scriptures; for though they meet in many parts of these Nations by great numbers, some in the open fields, and some on the Mountains in
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Some places, and sometime without doors, and sometime in houses, all this practise is according to the Scriptures; for we read *Mat. 5. 1.* in the days of Christ, That there were great multitudes of people that followed him, and he went up into a Mountain, and preached, and taught them upon the Mountain; and in *Mat. 14. & 14.* we read that there was great multitudes that came out of the Cities unto Jesus into the Deserts, & he had compassion toward them, and did good unto them, and at that time there was many thousands met together, as you may read; and it seems stayed whole days together, for they sat down on the grasse, and ate together, and then Jesus sent the multitudes away, and in *Mark 6.* you may read how that multitudes came to Jesus out of the Cities into a desert place, and Jesus began to teach them many things in that desert place, for he had compassion on the multitude; and in *Luke 9.* how the people again followed Jesus into a desert place, and he preached unto them the Kingdom of God. Such meetings then was counted strange, as such meetings are now when the people of God meets together by great numbers, to preach, and to hear the Kingdom of God preached; but their meetings are according to the Scriptures, for the people of God in generations past, met in the same manner as the people of God called *Quakers*, meets now; for sometime Christ preached out of a ship unto the people that stood on the sea shore; & * *Paul* kneeled down & prayed among the Saints near the sea shore, at his passing into the ship; and we read *Acts 2:* that there was three thousand converted at one Sermon, then there must needs be a great meeting, and a great deal of people met together; such meetings now are wondred at, but such meetings are but according to Scripture; so that this part of their practise in religion is agreeable to the Scriptures, and the same as the saints practise was in ages past: And as for the people of God meeting together sometime in the night-season to wait upon the Lord, and sometimes sitting in silence, & waiting upon the Lord & no words uttered amongst them, but every one sitting silent before the Lord having received nothing from the Lord to speak one to another, at which the people of the world do wonder, and falsely judg it not to be a christian exercise, but we read in the Scripture, *Jeb 2:* that *Jeb* (who was a christian, for he was a just and perfect

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And first of all, they dare not own themselves to be *Christians*, nor to be members of *Christ*, nor to have any right or title to the Kingdom of God, but as they witness converting by the spirit of the Lord, and are changed from death to life, and from darkness to light, and from Satans power to the power of God, through the operation of the same spirit, and as in all their works and ways, and exercises in Religion, they are guided by the same spirit who leadeth them out of the World, and out of all the vanities and evil works thereof, and this is according to the Scriptures, and their Religion herein is justified by the Scriptures, who witnesseth *That Christ is in them*, and that they have received him through faith, and thereby are cleansed from all unrighteousnesse, and have put off, and are putting off the body of sin and death, and walks with God in purity and holinesse, being led by the spirit of God therein, and with God they have peace, being reconciled by Jesus Christ, who is their salvation, and they have no other; and this is according to the Scriptures.

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* *Mark 4.*

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* *Luke 5 3.** *Acts 20*

fect man) he and his friends *sate upon the ground seven dayes, and seven nightes, and spake not a word one to another*; this would be a strange thing at this day to see practised: And in Jer. 8. 14. you may read, where the Prophet *Jeremiah* exhorted the people to assemble themselves, and said, *Let us enter into the defended Cities, and let us be silent there, for the Lord our God hath put us to silence*; but such a practise now is thought strange by the people of the world, who are not acquainted with the ways of God; who are wise in their own eyes, and knows not what it is to wait upon the Lord in silence, who never yet was put to silence in themselves by the Lord; and you may read Ezek. 3: where the Prophet *sate down among the people of the Captivity, and they were astonished seven dayes, and at the end of seven dayes, (and not before) the word of the Lord came to the Prophet*; so that you see it was the practise of the servants of the Lord oftentimes to sit and wait upon the Lord in silence, though people wonder at such meetings now; and we do not read that there was alwayes speaking among the Saints in the churches when they were met together; but Acts 2. we read that the church was met together in a place, and the Holy Ghost fell upon them, and then they *began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance*; then it seems they had not spoken before, though they had met together in a house, and then they spoke the wonderful things of God, and some that heard, mocked, and others said they were full of new Wine; even as the people of the World do at this day when any of the people of the Lord are moved to speak as the spirit gives utterance; so that sometime to sit in silence being met together to wait upon the Lord, as many of the servants of the Lord do in this Nation, is a practise of Religion, and not contrary, but according to the Scriptures, for many of the servants and assemblies of the Lords people practised the same thing in ages past, as the servants of the Lord do at this day; & so this practise is to be upholden and maintained, because it is proved to be according to the Scriptures, for the same thing was practised heretofore; and we read Acts 20. 7. that the church met in the night, for *Paul* continued his sermon till midnight: And as for their practise in speaking, either man or woman as the spirit gives utterance, this is according to the Scriptures, though it be much wondred at, and cryed against by the wise men and people

people of this age, for we read *Act. 2.* that they spoke in their meeting as the spirit gave them utterance, without studying before-hand what to say; & the Lord promised that *sons and daughters should prophesie*, & in *Act. 21. 9.* we read of one that had four daughters that did prophesie; & divers other places in Scripture doth shew that women * *laboured in the Gospel*, which doth prove that a woman speaking & declaring the things of God, is not contrary, but according to the Scriptures, and that any who are moved of the Lord, may declare the things of God, man or woman; and the Apostle saith, *1 Pet. 4. 10.* *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another*; so that this practise in Religion is proved to be according to the Scriptures.

And as concerning their call to the Ministry, some are called from their ordinary callings, as from the Plough, or from handicraft work or tradings, or such like: this is according to the Scriptures also, for we read *Matt. 4. 18, 19.* where the disciples were called from their Nets, and some were called from the receipt of custom; and we read *Amos 7.* that he was a Herdsman, & a gatherer of Sycamore fruit, & * *Elisha* * *1 Kings 19. 19.* was called from the Plough; and some others were called from keeping of sheep: So that their call to the Ministry, and practise in the Ministry, is according to the Scriptures; for the servants of the Lord in former ages were called to the Ministry after the same manner; so in that they do agree to the Scripture both in Ministry and ministering, and so may own protection herein by the Protectors oath.

And as concerning their going up and down through the Countries, and from City to City, and from one Town to another, and from one Nation to another, this is according to the Scriptures, though some seek occasion thereby against them, and unjustly takes them as for Vagabonds, and executes their envy upon them, yet it was the Apostles practise, as you may read in the Book of *Acts*, where the Apostles travelled from Countrey to Countrey, and from one City to another; and though some of the servants of the Lord are moved now to speak and dispute in the Markets, and reprove sin in the gates, and in the streets, and in the high-ways, and threatening Gods judgements against the wicked, all these things are according to the Scripture, and

their practise herein is justified by the Scriptures; for we read *Acts 17. 17.* that *Paul disputed in the Synagogues with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the Market daily with them that met with him;* and we read *Jer. 7.* that he was commanded to stand in the Gate of the Lords House, and to speak to all that passed into it. And *Jer. 26.* we read that he was commanded to stand in the Court of the Lords House, without doors, and to speak to all the Cities of Judah. And we read in the Booke of *Jonah*, how he was commanded to go through the streets, and to reprove sin, and to threaten Gods judgements against the wicked; and these practises were strange in that generation, as they are at this day unto the World, who are not acquainted with the ways of God; but all people may see, though the servants of the Lord do practise these things now as they are moved, their practise herein is according to the Scriptures, for the servants of the Lord in former ages acted the same things; so that in this practise the servants of the Lord ought not to be persecuted, but protected and maintained in it, and that by the Protectors oath, because it is proved to be according to the Scriptures, which he is sworn to maintain.

And as concerning their crying against such, and declaring against them by word and writing, *that preach for hire, and divines for money, and seek for their gain from their quarter, and such who goes for gifts and rewards, and hath sums of money by the year for preaching, and though they deny such that acts those things, to be Ministers of Christ, this practise also is according to the Scriptures, for we read Mich. 3.* that he declared against such as *preached for hire, and divined for money, and such were no Ministers of Christ.* And we read *Isa. 56.* that he declared against them that *sought for their gain from their quarter, which were greedy covetous men, such as is many of the Teachers of England.* Again, we read *Mat. 23.* where Christ declared against such, &c did not own such to be any of his Ministers, *who were called of men Master, who stood praying in the Synagogue, and had the chief places in the Assemblies.* And we read in *2 Pet. 2.* and in many other places, where the Apostles declared against such, and denied such to be Ministers of Christ, *that preached for filthy lucre, and took gifts and rewards for preaching, and by feigned words made*

merchandize of souls, who were heady and high minded men, as you may read 2 *Tim.* 3. chap. and such men were denyed to be Ministers of Christ, by the Prophets, Christ, and his Apostles. So that all people may see this practice of the servants of the Lord at this day, who are moved to declare against such men that acts these things mentioned, is perfectly according to the Scriptures; for the servants of the Lord spoken of in Scripture, did the very same things in this particular, as is done at this day; therefore for this practice they ought not to be persecuted as they have been, but ought to be protected and maintained in it, and that by the Protectors Oath, who hath sworn to maintain that practice which is according to the Scripture; and to declare against them that preach for hire, and have great sums of money for preaching, and that are called of men Master, and that takes gifts and rewards of people for preaching; I say, to do thus is a practice which the Scripture gives a large example for; and so it must needs be according to the Scriptures, and ought to be protected in this Government.

Again, as concerning their denying to respect persons, or to bow with hat or knee, in respect of worshipping any creature, this also is according to the Scriptures, though the people of the world, who live in pride and vain customs, are offended with them in this practice; for we read that God commanded not to bow to any likeness, *Exod.* 20. And we read *James* 2. the Apostle exhorts not to have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons, but condemns that practice of respecting such as are in goodly apparel, and gay clothing, and have gold Rings, above a poor man in vile rayment; and he saith plainly, They that have respect to persons, commit sin; and we read that the Pharisees said of Christ, he respected no mans person; and he is our example. And we read that the three children was cast into the fiery Furnace with indignation before the King, being bound before him, and cast into the Furnace, *Dan.* 3. And we read that Paul and all the servants of God, did shew Kings, and Princes, and Rulers, and they spoke plainly to all men, and durst not give flattering titles to any, as you may read in *Jeb* 32. so that all people may see the practice in denying to respect persons, and in
 speak-

speaking plainly, without flattering Titles to any man, denying to put off the Hat, or bowing to men in gay clothing, or giving place to such that wear Gold Rings, and have goodly apparel, before such as have vile raiment, is justly according to the Scriptures, though people stumble at such practises, and the people of God may claim to be maintained in this practise of their Religion, seeing it is proved to be commanded in Scriptures, not to respect the person of any man; and also it was the Saints practise, and therefore herein they ought not to be condemned, but justified, as being a practice in Religion agreeing with the Scriptures.

And as concerning their denying obedience to Magistrates in some causes, this is according to the Scripture also, for we read that the Rulers commanded the Apostles, and straitly charged them *to speak no more in the Name of Jesus*; yet the Apostles did not obey Magistrates herein, neither did they cease to preach in the Name of Jesus; and though Christ was commanded, or besought to depart out of their coasts, yet he did not obey their request; and we read that the three children were commanded to worship the great Image, yet they did not obey this command of the King. So that all people may see it is lawful for the Saints to disobey commands of Kings & Rulers, where they command that to be done or spoken which God doth not, but the contrary: And I say again, Where Kings or Rulers, Parents or Masters doth command or require any thing of them that are under them which is not according to God, in such causes subjects, or people, and children and servants, are free, and not required of the Lord to subject to any thing which is not justly according to him; but yet we say, That subjects, and people, and children, and servants ought to be subject to them that have rule over them, in all things which is according to God in truth and righteousness, and by the Law of God all people are bound to obey those that have rule over them, and not to disobey them in any thing which may stand with the exercise of a good conscience to God; so that though the people of the Lord now do deny to depart out of a Town or place, and though they will not cease to declare against sin and wickedness in Teachers

chers and people, though a Magistrate command it, this is but according to the Scriptures, for the Apostles went on boldly, declaring the Name of the Lord after they were forbidden, and thus the servants of the Lord doth now, they freely declare the way of salvation, and calls people to repent, and reproves iniquity in all sorts of people, though wicked men command them to the contrary, and falsely charges them that they are disobedient to Government and Authority, though they are not, no more then the servants of God, and Apostles of Christ, who in the same causes, did the same things; and the Lord hath commanded to *cry aloud, and not to spare*, but to tell people of their transgressions; and therefore many of the Lords servants doth deny to be silent, or to cease from declaring against sin, though a Magistrate command it: And Christ hath commanded not to *swear at all*; and therefore many doth deny to swear upon any account, in any place, though the Magistrates do command it. And the servants of the Lord doth deny to put off a Hat, or to bow in respect of any mans person, though a Magistrate command it; for the Scripture doth say, *He that respects persons, commits sin*; so that all people may see that what the servant of the Lord doth in these things, are not contrary, but according to the Scriptures, for all these things were commanded & practised by the Saints in former ages, & they said it was better to obey God then man, and we ought to do it in all things, and that according to the Scriptures too. So that in all these practises in religion the Scriptures justifies them, and be rs witnesses to them, and they might claim protection in the exercise of them by the Protectors oath, but if they be not maintained, but persecuted for the practise of these things, then will the light in every mans conscience witness the oath is broken, and not kept; for it extends to uphold and maintain the practice of Religion which is according to the Scriptures, as these is proved to be.

And as concerning their doctrines w^{ch} the world stumbles at, yet their doctrines are according to the Scripture, though they say, Chr. is the light of the world, & lighteth every man, or hath given light to every man that cometh into the world, this is according to the

the Scripture, as you may read, *Joh. 8. 12. & Joh. 1. 9.* and though they turn people from darkness to the light of Christ within them, & exhorts people to hearken to that within them, & not to seek a Christ without them, *to ascend or descend to fetch him,* these Doctrines are perfectly according to the Scripture; for you may read *Acts 26. 18.* *Paul saith he was sent to turn people from darkness to the light, and from the power of Satan to the power of God;* and *Rom. 10* you may read the Apostle saith, *What saith it, The Word is nigh thee in thy heart, that is, The Word of Faith which we preach;* and they were not to say, *Who shall ascend, or descend to fetch Christ.* And though they tell people they must witness Christ in them, or else they cannot be saved; this also is according to the Scriptures, as you may read *2 Cor. 13. chap.* the Apostle saith, *Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobrates.* And though they say, Christ is the Word of God, and doth deny the Scriptures to be the Word by which the World was made; this Doctrine also is according to the Scriptures; for we read *Rev. 19. 13.* that the Name of Jesus is called the Word of God. And *Luke 1.* of the Scriptures it is said, they are a Declaration by those which were eye-witnesses and Ministers of the Word. And though they press people to perfection, and doth say, Men may be perfect upon Earth, and compleat in Christ Jesus, this Doctrine also is according to the Scriptures; for you may read *1 Cor. 2. chap:* and *6:* of some that were perfect, who were men upon earth; and the Ministers of Christ spoke Wisdom among them that were already perfect; and *Col. 2. 10.* the Apostle saith unto the Church who were men in this life upon Earth, he saith to them, *Ye are compleat in him.* And though they press the people to live without sin, and doth say, They that are born of God doth not commit sin, this also is according to the Scripture; for it is Christs command, *Mat: 5:* *Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect:* and *1 Joh. 3.* there it is spoken of some that were the sons of God already, and he saith, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, for he cannot sin because he is born of God;* and saith he, *As he is, [Christ] so are we in this present world.* And now all people may understand that in all these Doctrines which they do hold forth, they do fully

ly agree with the Scriptures, and they bear witness to the truth of their Doctrines, that the servants of God, and the Apostles of Christ, did preach the very same things for Doctrine as is done at this day; and so these Doctrines are not to be wondred at, not so much as they are by the wicked to be cryed against for heresie and error; and these few particulars onely I have mentioned, at which the people of this age the most stumble at; and all other things whatsoever which is held forth for Doctrines unto people, I am able to prove them by the Scriptures, that in all things they are according to the Scripture, & not different or contrary to the Scriptures; so that all people may take notice and see that whatsoever they do practice for Religion, and holds forth for Doctrine, they do herein justly according to the Scriptures, and they justify their practises & doctrines in these things mentioned, and in whatsoever else can be objected by any man. And this I shall take in hand to prove before all the World, That the people of God called Quakers, doth practice nothing for Religion, or preach for Doctrine, but what is perfectly according to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and in the fulfilling of them; and so they are proved to be of that true christian Religion which is according to the Scriptures, and so may fully claim protection and preservation in their practice of Religion: And this is to be considered by the Protector and all Magistrates and people in these Nations, that they may know what the true Christian Religion is, and who is in it, and who is not in it; and for this purpose is this written, for the satisfaction of all people, that they may see who it is that hath a right and priviledg to be protected & upholden by vertue of the Oath.

Likewise all may understand, That what such practice and profess for Religion, is not without good ground, but that the very same things were practised by them that were of the true Christian Religion, and preached for Doctrine by them that were Saints, which is now practised and held forth by the people of God; and the Scriptures doth fully bear witness in all things, shewing that such are guided by the same spirit which the Saints were guided by in ages past; and as they had, so have these the testimony that they are of God, and that the whole world lies in wickedness.

And as concerning their being persecuted by many of the Rulers, Priests and People, though they be sent to prison, and banished out of Towns, and whipped and beaten, and scorned, and reviled, this is also according to the Scriptures, and the Scriptures is fulfilled upon them; for the same things were done to the Apostles, and to the servants of the Lord, as you may read through the *Acts*, the people mocked the Apostles, and slandered them, and said they were full of new Wine, and the chief Priests conspired against Christ and the Apostles, and incensed the Magistrates against them, and the Magistrates put Christ and many of the Apostles in prison, and caused them to be whipped and beaten, & to be banished, & many other cruelties done unto them; the Scripture is full to prove this, from the beginning, to the end of it, and Christ said, *They shall persecute you, and speak all manner of evil of you for my Names sake, and as they have done unto me, so shall they do unto you; ye shall be hated of Nations:* And the Apostle said, *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.* So that all people may see, though the people of the Lord be persecuted, and reviled, and imprisoned, and cruelty done unto them; and though it be done by the chief Magistrates, and chief Rulers, and the wise men of this age, all this is according to the Scriptures, and that the Scriptures might be fulfilled; and the same things which are now done unto the people of God, were done unto the people of God in ages past by the same instruments, to wit, the Rulers and Magistrates; and by the same means, to wit, by the information, and false accusations of the chief Priests and Teachers, in *Jeremiah* you may read how the Priests sought to take away his life; and you may read how the chief Priests conspired against Christ, and how they complained to the Magistrates against him and the Apostles; and the same things are now come to pass, and we do not strange at it, for it is the chief Priests of England that doth most seek the persecution, and causes the people of God to be persecuted by their complaining and petitioning to the Magistrates; so that in all these things, not onely what is practised and preached for Doctrine, but also in what is suffered, is perfectly according to the Scriptures, and all people that are not

not blind, may see that this Religion is in all things agreeable with the Scriptures, both in what they do and in what they suffer, so that this is given forth for the good information of the Protector, and all Magistrates, that they may hear the tryal of all things, and may not falsely conjecture or suppose; and thereupon give judgement without any true knowledge, let them search the Scripture, and try; I hope the worst of men hath so much conscience, that they will stand in awe of the breach of their own oaths, and that they will perform unto the Lord and unto all men, what they have firmly (and not compell'd) sworn to do; and thus it may be hoped the woful persecution wil cease, which is lamentable to be declared, how the people of the Lord have sufferd in many things, even them whose Religion is proved to be according to the Scriptures, who practice nothing for Religion, neither holds forth any thing for Doctrine but that which is perfectly agreeable to the Scriptures, as all people hereby may understand; which Religion the Protector hath sworn to maintain and uphold; then who shall presume to persecute the people whose practise in Religion is proved to be the very same which his oath extends to maintain? Surely no men will be so impudent, or shew such rebellion to Government, as to endeavour to break down and destroy that people whose Religion is proved to be justly that which he is by oath bound to maintain; some heretofore before this Oath was taken, might plead ignorance, and say they knew not the mind of the Protector, but now his mind is fully discovered, and he doth not onely allow, but also hath solemnly sworne to maintain and uphold that Christian Religion which is according to Scriptures; and it is proved what people it is whose Religion is so; and I say again, That same people mentioned doth practice nothing, neither holds forth any thing for Doctrine, but it is either commanded, or there is president for it in Scripture, or agreeable thereto; and therefore that same people is of the true Christian Religion which the Lord Protector hath bound himselfe to maintain, by oath in the face of the whole Nations, so that none of the Magistrats now can plead ignorance: for as he is sworn to uphold the people of God in their Religion, so are

they bound to be true to him and the Government, and to fulfil the good Laws, and his oaths and enterprises; so that I say again; it may be hoped for the time to come, for protection, and to be maintained, and no longer persecuted and destroyed in their persons and estates, as formerly they have been, if men regard their own oaths, or there be any truth or sincerity in the heart of man; and I say, By this very oath mentioned might the people of God own and claim protection and defence in their way and practise of Religion, which is so plainly proved to be according to the Scriptures, though none of them desired such an oath for their protection, or sought after it; yet being voluntarily instituted and taken, why may not they own the extent of it, which reacheth to them more, then to any besides, as is clearly described; and not for their own sakes altogether, do they own the benefit of it, but that he which hath taken it, may be clear in the sight of the Lord in performing of his oath, for his felicity, and the increase and continuance of good Government, they desire as much as their own protection, and they would not have any man so wicked, or the cause of perpetual infamy to be given to this Nation so much, as that any thing should be destroyed or broken down, which is sworn to be upheld and maintained in the Nation, lest the Heathen Rulers rise in condemnation against the doers thereof: These, with many other arguments which might be produced, presseth many to endeavour the fulfilling of the said oath, for his own sake who hath taken it.

And that first of all, by that oath the people of God may own protection in this Commonwealth, because their Religion is according to the Scriptures, &c.

Secondly, That some people might also own protection in this Commonwealth, in that the most of them, if not all, have been true and faithful subjects of this Commonwealth, and hazarded lives and estates for the establishing of such a Government wherein the people of God might have full liberty for the exercise of their pure conscience.

Again, they may own protection in this Commonwealth as being at this day a harmless and innocent people, not being offensive to any.

any mans person or estate, or in any other thing, (except to sin and wickedness, and the works thereof) and I say again, That they do not desire any thing but the welfare, and the increase, and the establishment of this present Government, wherein it is according to God. And this is written for the information of all sorts of people, that they may know unto what sort of people the Protectors oath extends to uphold and maintain; and as concerning all those whose practise in Religion and Doctrines are not according to Scripture, but contrary to it, as is manifest, and so not to be maintained and upholden in their profession and practise of Religion by the Protectors oath; yet it is not desired that such should be destroyed, or overthrown, or bound, or imprisoned, or any cruelly done to them, though their practise be not according to Scriptures; but its desired that such may live in peace in the Commonwealth, enjoying their Religion to themselves without any molestation from any outward Law, or outward power, for many would not that any should be compelled to, or from any exercises in Religion by an outward Law, but let them defend themselves in their Religion, from those who may be moved of the Lord to reprove them, or declare against them, or convince them; so that many would have Religion to defend it self, and that the Magistrates with their Laws may preserve the peace in the Commonwealth, and mens persons and Estates, and not their opinions and judgements; and we would they may not limit or stint tender consciences, for many may be of a tender conscience in those things wherein their consciences are not truly informed, and such should not bee condemned to death, but to be won by sound doctrine, and instructed by those who are called of God, and so this is written that the whole Nation may understand the minde of the Lords servants in all these things. And let no man blame me, for I have but with an equal hand brought all sorts of people to the line of true judgement, that they may know who is to be maintained (and who is not) in their Religion, and practises thereof.

But and if that after all this, the people of God be persecuted, and violence be done to them, and injustice and unrighteousness acted upon them in this Commonwealth, as of late years hath been, and yet it be suffered to be, and none take any notice to preserve and defend them whose Religion is according to Scripture,

Scripture, which he is sworn to maintain, then I leave it to the light in all mens consciences to judge, what a condition such are in whose oath is not kept, but broken; for these things are of no less value then either breaking or keeping a mans own oath, which solemnly hath been taken; and this is not a light thing, but to be seriously considered of both by Magistrates, Teachers and people in this Commonwealth, yet notwithstanding all this, the people of God doth not boast in, or trust unto the arm of flesh, neither are any whit the more confident in their way, though it be proved that they ought in justice to be upholden and maintained in what they profess and practise, as aforesaid; for their hope and confidence is onely in God, who onely is sufficient to protect and uphold his people in all their ways and exercises; and though all men do forget their own promises and oaths, yet will not the Lord forget his chosen people, to defend them from all their Enemies, who hath again appeared to gather his people, after the long and dark night of apostacy, and his House and Tabernacle shall be exalted over all the Earth.

An Objection.

Now many may say, seeing I challenge, claim, and affirm that this Religion is the true Religion which is according to Scripture, then they ask and say, Hath there been no true Religion before this? or hath all these Religions been false before? and seeing this hath but newly appeared in the world, was there no true Religion before? and if there were any, where was it? and what was that Religion, seeing there hath not been for many ages such a Religion as this is: And after this manner doth many reason and object to themselves, and raises to themselves stumblings, and conceits themselves that our forefathers were of a good way, and many of them sure were saved which was not of this Religion, which did not profess and practise these things which is professed and practised by this people.

Answer.

Now unto all these I do answer and say, That this Religion is the true Religion which is according to Scriptures, as is proved

ved already, seeing they profess and practice nothing for Religion but what the Scriptures doth justify, and shews the very examples of the same things; but that God had a people in all ages, and a seed that never bowed to *Baal* its believed, and such as did sincerely seek after God according to what they knew, and they were accepted of God according to what was made manifest in that age and generation; yet the testimony of truth it self, and the way of the Lord it self, for many generations hath not so clearly and purely been held forth, as it is now in this age and generation; for now the true light hath shined, and the way of salvation is evidently made manifest, as by many witnessses and evident tokens which may be given, and was not so clearly for many ages past, held forth and known: And such who have been sincerely seeking after God; though they knew not perfectly the way unto him, neither had they such a pure testimony revealed to guide them, as now is manifest, yet such do now rejoice, and owns the way of the Lord, and the seed of God is refreshed in them, and all causes of stumbling removed, and the pure light of the Gospel is sprung forth more clear in this age, then in any age for many generations; for the Scripture sheweth that a dark night of Apostacy hath been over the whole world; and the beast hath reigned, and the false Prophet hath deceived many Nations; and the whole World hath wondered after the beast for many ages, and the beast hath made war with the Saints, and hath had power to kill them, and hath put a stop many times to the appearances of God, till now at length he doth appear, and the power of hell and death shall not stop it, and they do say that they are come out of the Apostacy, to the dawning of the day again, and the same power of God, and the same truth as was in the Apostles days, and the same Ministry by the gift of the same Holy Ghost as was in the Apostles days, is now witnessed, and at the time of ignorance God winked, but now the eye is opened, and all is called to repentance; so it will not excuse any man to plead how it was with our forefathers, or to say, Where was this Religion before these few years, and such like, for now the power of God it self is made manifest, which brings into the true Religion, and all that are of God heareth it,

it, and shall own it, and shall receive the Testimony which is given: It's known that there are many thousands which hath not yet owned it, in which there is true thirstings after God, and a zeal for him, and such are not condemned to be altogether out of Religion, for such seeks his face, and the day is neither clear nor dark to them, in which they are; and such shall own and submit to the Government of Christ; and they that are not under the Government, are not of the true Religion, as I said; This is the time of restoration, and the Lord is bringing back again, and a thorough reformation wil the Lord work in the Earth, such as hath not been known in ages past. There hath been a Seed sown which the Devil hath caught away; but now the Seed shall grow, and become the greatest of all herbs, and the fowls of Heaven shall lodge in the Branches.

And this is a plain answer to all sober people, for according to the Scriptures in the times of the Apostles, the day of glorious light sprung forth, and mighty was the power of God at that day, but since hath darkness overshadowed all; and Antichrist hath reigned, and the whole world hath been made drunk with the wine of fornication, which hath been in the hand of the whore, who hath set upon the Beast; and upon Nations and Peoples, and the Gentiles hath trodden under foot the holy City of God for forty and two months; but now is the time of restoration as hath been promised, that the Lord is bringing back his people again, and the Tabernacle of God shall be with men; and Christ alone must reign and rule, and his Kingdom set up over the whole world.

And let no man be offended at what I have done; for I have not reflected upon any mans person, but on what he practiseth for Religion.

London, the tenth

Month, 1657.

The End: